

## Poster - The Digital Dilemma

### Authors

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### Focus

Active teaching and learning in higher education

Facilitation of the students' motivation, social relations and learning, e.g. through the use of study groups

Evaluations on programme and/or faculty level

### What did you intend the students to learn from this teaching and learning activity?

The presentation addresses Master students' perception of their learning outcome after being unexpectedly placed in a situation with online supervision and group work regarding their 8<sup>th</sup> semester written project, due to the pandemic, COVID-19. It is an empirical focus that guides the presentation which consists of the findings from qualitative interviews with the students at the Tourism program at Aalborg University (AAU). These were conducted after the first lockdown in March 2020 during the months July-August 2020.

### Which general features of the teaching and learning activity, would you share at TAL2020?

The abstract relates to the theme 'pedagogical challenges, solutions and prospects in online teaching and learning during and after the lockdown'.

### According to you and the students, what was the impact of the teaching and learning activity on student learning/engagement?

The digital dilemma indicates that the PBL (Problem Based Learning) approach requires in depth learning. Our findings suggest that the students tended to spend less time on discussions and arguments and tended to agree more on decisions without further discussions. Consequently, the learning impact becomes more fragmented, understood as issues in the project were often not discussed thoroughly through iterative processes and disagreements due to lack of profound negotiations between the group members.

### How could your practice be inspirational/transferable to other teachers, students, institutions in future teaching?

We were interested in getting the students' perspective on the implications for learning, when studying at the university required no physical meetings, yet still with a PBL approach (Problem Based Learning perspective which requires collaboration between the students and/or also external stakeholders when working with their project). The lockdown happened when the semester lecturing was done, and the students had to focus on the semester projects. Our initial assumption was that working online would lack the negotiations usually characterizing PBL project work when meeting physically. Surprisingly, the findings demonstrated a more nuanced picture, where students highlighted several advantages both as a communication tool and the flexible working conditions. However, they did acknowledge they also faced several unexpected challenges as well. One of the main challenges was the difficulty in identifying the range of body languages and in acting upon this when all communication/encounters were online.

The digital dilemma also poses challenges to teachers and administration. We will briefly touch upon digital teaching, seen from the point of view of instructors and the implications for syllabus and organization of courses.